

Plus-Minus-Interesting

A Strategy to Foster Critical Thinking

Based on the work of Edward deBono, PMI is a strategy that helps students learn to:

- see both sides of an argument
- view things from a different point of view
- think broadly about an issue
- suspend judgement
- make informed decisions
- work as individuals, in pairs or as members of a group

This strategy can be used within a range of classroom activities such as analyzing texts or examining issues.

Individually, in pairs or small or large groups, students apply three questions to a statement or task provided by the teacher:

- What are the positive ideas about this?
- What are the negative ideas about this?
- What is interesting about this?

Students are provided with a format for recording:

| Plus | Minus | Interesting |
|------|-------|-------------|
| | | |

A recorder and reporter are appointed and within a specified time limit, students brainstorm their responses. At the end of the designated time, students report back on their most original/creative ideas from each of the categories.

It is useful to model the activity first, using a statement such as: "In the near future, global warming will lead to large-scale melting of the polar ice caps."

(Adapted from <http://www.discover.tased.edu.au/english/PMI.htm>)



Adaptation: (Keep It, Junk It, Put It In the Cloud)

PMI could be used for a summarizing/decision-making strategy whereby the students examine (individually, in small/large groups) the information and decide to **Keep It** (it's important information), **Junk It** (it's not important information), or **Put It In the Cloud** (set it aside to decide about later). It is similar to looking at the pros and cons of a topic with the added ability to suspend judgment until later.

A great critical thinking tool! A classroom poster is on the next page. Enjoy 😊

DECIDING WHAT'S IMPORTANT

PMI



Keep it!

Minus

Junk it!



**Put it in the cloud
to decide later!**